



Seattle Human Rights Commission

Established 1963

Resolution # 12-02: Support for Seattle Care Council: Caring Across Generations

WHEREAS, the Seattle Human Rights Commission is committed to advocate for justice, human rights, and the equal treatment of all people who live and work in Seattle; and

WHEREAS, Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control”; and

WHEREAS, the above-mentioned rights are impacted in our community in the area of the provision of home health care, including but not limited to in the following ways:

- according to the 2010 Census, 10.3% of the Seattle population is 65 or older, and 12.1% of the population is between the ages of 55 and 64;
- in Seattle, 3,792 individuals receive home care support through DSHS, and the number will grow as the baby-boomers age;
- 21% of the U.S. adult population age 18 and older provides unpaid care to an adult age 18 or older;
- seniors and individuals with disabilities thrive in communities that provide choice as well as access to in-home care and integration, and in turn, communities thrive when they are diverse and inclusive of seniors and people with disabilities;
- the direct care workforce is not protected by many important labor laws, including overtime protection and minimum wage, creating substandard working conditions that threaten the standards for all working people;
- in King County, 62.5% of direct care workers earn less than 200% of the poverty level, and in Seattle, only 24.4% of home care workers have employer-sponsored health insurance;
- in Seattle, the care workforce is made up of 65.4% people of color; and
- immigrants are filling the vital role of care workers all over the country, but the lack of a pathway to citizenship pushes workers into an underground economy, and destabilizes our communities through the constant threat of deportation.

WHEREAS, these issues specifically affect rights embodied in the Charter of the United Nations in Articles 1, 2, 3, 7, 23, 24, and 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in

Articles 22 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Articles 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic and Cultural Rights; and

WHEREAS, our federal, state and local governments have the responsibility to make policy changes that address these needs; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Care Council, a local division of Caring Across Generations, is working to support home care workers and the public, who utilize and depend on their services, by promoting the passage of local, state and federal legislation to:

PROTECT:

- 1) Funding for Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security
- 2) Home Care Jobs
- 3) Worker's Right To Organize

AND CREATE:

- 1) Create jobs necessary to meet the growing demand for direct care;
- 2) Transform the quality of current direct care jobs – to include a living wage, access to health insurance and other benefits, and protection of health and safety;
- 3) Create a rewarding career path and training programs that are linguistically and culturally relevant to improve quality of care and safety for care workers
- 4) Provide a path to legal status and citizenship for undocumented care workers and their families that is tied to participation in training and certification programs; and
- 5) Support individuals and families who are hiring direct care workers by increasing access to Medicaid/Medicare, adding long term care as a Medicare benefit, creating a tax credit, and providing training and assistance on hiring and retaining direct care workers. Recognizing the variety of caregiving relationships, the campaign also supports individuals and families who are providing unpaid kinship care, through Social Security care-giving credits, paid family leave, and childcare subsidies.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seattle Human Rights Commission hereby declares its support of the Seattle Care Council and its policy agenda; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Seattle Human Rights Commission further recommends that the Mayor and the Council of the City of Seattle support such legislation.

Adopted by the Seattle Human Rights Commission on June 7, 2012



Christopher Stearns, Chair



Joshuah Marshall, Secretary